

**DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL**

*The California Highway Patrol is a law enforcement and traffic safety agency reporting to Business, Transportation and Housing Agency Secretary Maria Contreras-Sweet and Governor Gray Davis.*



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***CHP AIRPLANES BACK IN THE SKY***

(SACRAMENTO) CHP Commissioner Dwight 'Spike' Helmick announces that the highway patrol's fleet of Cessna 206 airplanes will be back in service in time for the Labor Day weekend. The twelve aircraft were grounded last week after two of the planes experienced engine shutdowns in flight. Both planes made emergency landings without further incident or injuries. Metal shavings were found in the oil line of a third plane.

During the past week engineers from Cessna Aircraft, Lycoming engines, and the CHP determined that the failure was not related to faulty bearings, which were the subject of F.A.A. warnings. The crankshaft failed in one of the engines. The cause of the other failure is still under investigation, as is the cause of the metal shavings. New engines were installed in those three aircraft. Until final determination of causes, CHP maintenance inspections will be increased on all of the Cessna 206's. The planes will be put back into service over the next couple of days as those two-hour inspections are completed.

"I am delighted that we will have these valuable law enforcement tools back in service for the holiday driving period," says Commissioner Helmick. "I also want to compliment the folks at Cessna and Lycoming for their prompt response to our problems and their continued efforts to get to the bottom of this mystery."

Cessna Aircraft CEO Gary Hay responds, "Cessna and Lycoming are very happy that we have been able to work with the CHP to ensure the safe return to flight status of the T206 fleet. We will

continue to work closely with the CHP to expand our relationship based on a solid foundation of mutual trust.”

The aircraft were purchased from Cessna beginning last November to replace the CHP’s aging fleet of previous aircraft. The airplanes are used for traffic enforcement, congestion relief, patrolling rural areas and spotting forest fires.

“I am pleased this was resolved so quickly. It is a great example of private business and government working together to solve a problem in a timely manner,” says Maria Contreras-Sweet, Secretary of The Business, Transportation and Housing Agency.

The California Highway Patrol is a department of The Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, Maria Contreras-Sweet, Secretary.

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